

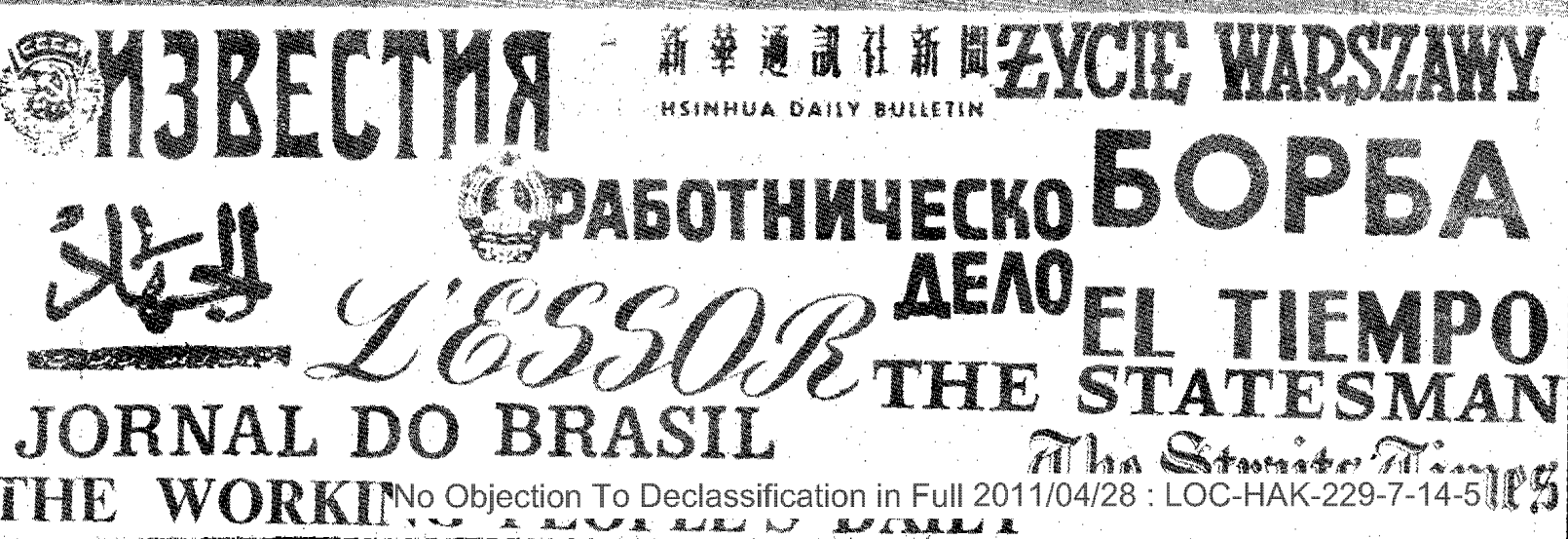
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President's Far East Trip - III
(Vladivostok Communique)

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PRESIDENT'S FAR EAST TRIP - III

(Vladivostok Communique)

Summary

Media in major foreign news centers gave top or prominent play to U.S. and Soviet statements that a "breakthrough" on arms control negotiation had been achieved at Vladivostok.

While much initial comment accepted the idea of breakthrough, some influential observers pointed out that Mr. Ford and Mr. Brezhnev had only "agreed to agree," and held that the real test was whether a more comprehensive SALT accord could actually be completed for signature at the "full summit" next spring.

--The Times of London said that if negotiators "come up with an agreement that works and is adhered to by both parties," the Ford-Brezhnev meeting "will turn out to have been a very important landmark. Until then it is reasonable to withhold judgment."

--Hamburg's Die Welt asserted that "now we can look to positive effects on the whole world's political landscape" but was concerned that "if there was no basic agreement on keeping the Middle East under control, that failure could be the Achilles heel in Kissinger's arrangement."

--Figaro of Paris declared that for Mr. Kissinger "the 'post-Watergate era' has begun," that he "is convinced that he managed to persuade Leonid Brezhnev that Gerald Ford is a man with whom it is safe to negotiate."

--Ultima Hora of Sao Paulo remarked that the Vladivostok agreement "will permit many people to sleep better at night--depending on how naive they are."

Soviet and East European media gave the meeting extensive play. Comment hailed the understanding on further arms limitation negotiation as a significant development proving the validity of detente.

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London Headlines

British media lauded the Ford-Brezhnev agreement on negotiating a strategic arms limitation accord but pointed out that it was only a preliminary understanding.

These were among today's headlines: "U.S. Claims Breakthrough in Missile Pact" (The Times, lead story); "U.S. Wins Deal on Arms" (Manchester Guardian, page one); "Ford Triumph in Fight to End the Arms Race" (Daily Mirror); "Ford Plays His Ace" (Daily Express).

"At Least Something to Look Forward to"

An editorial in the independent Times of London said that if American and Soviet negotiators "come up with an agreement that works and is adhered to by both parties," the Ford-Brezhnev meeting "will turn out to have been a very important landmark.

"Until then it is reasonable to withhold judgment."

The paper recalled that "the first SALT agreement...aroused hopes that were never realized," but it concluded that the Vladivostok understanding "does at least give the world something to look forward to... (It) does suggest that there has been some meeting of minds on the need to avoid a new and more dangerous and expensive round in the arms race."

"Chinese More Analytical This Time"

In connection with Secretary Kissinger's visit to China, the paper's Peking correspondent, David Bonavia, reported "a strong feeling here that the brilliant coups of Dr. Kissinger's early visit to Peking are at an end, and that China and the U.S. are floundering in the attempt to find a relationship more substantial than the sort of drawing room cordiality which has been established." He predicted that "the Chinese will...be looking at Dr. Kissinger in a more analytic light this time, bearing in mind that his tenure of office is no longer so secure."

Correspondent John Gittings of the liberal Manchester Guardian remarked that "the easy gains in 'normalizing' Sino-U.S. relations have all been made but the barrier of Taiwan again blocks the road. There is also the suspicion that for Peking as well as Washington the future of relations with the Soviet Union may count for rather more."

"Only an Agreement to Agree"

The paper's Washington correspondent, Hella Pick, reported that President Ford was "making a triumphant return from his first encounter with Mr. Brezhnev."

In an editorial, The Guardian said:

"For those who live in the valley below, the most encouraging outcome of the Ford-Brezhnev summit was that the next strategic arms limitation agreement is to last until 1985. The rest was less encouraging..."

"The present SALT agreement says that this hideous armory represents a fair balance... President Ford and Mr. Brezhnev have now agreed that SALT II must represent a fair balance, too, even though it is inevitable that there will be more missiles in the 1980s and that they will be even deadlier. This is an achievement, but it is only an agreement to agree, a resolution to persuade the Pentagon to come to terms with Marshal Grechko. And vice versa."

"Soviet Message--Ford Seen as Serious Partner"

For Guardian correspondent Jonathan Steele, "the major Soviet message to emerge from the Vladivostok summit" came from Mr. Brezhnev, who "made it clear that he considers President Ford to be a serious negotiating partner."

An editorial in the independent London Financial Times cautioned that "the final negotiations will succeed only if both sides continue to pursue an understanding on other areas, most obviously the Middle East. It is at least an encouraging sign that President Ford and Mr. Brezhnev have been able to take up the dialogue where Mr. Nixon left off."

"Triumph for Ford"

Washington correspondent Stephen Barber, in Asia to cover the President's travels, judged today in the conservative Daily Telegraph that "the Vladivostok accord on strategic arms...clearly represents a major triumph for the American President on his first foray in the role of world statesman."

"Test of Soviet Good Faith--the Middle East"

The paper observed editorially that "President Ford and Mr. Brezhnev have raised hopes throughout the world by their agreement in principle on a plan for limiting the numbers of American and Russian offensive nuclear weapons... but there are still plenty of problems. The Russians are notoriously tough negotiators and their good faith is always suspect... The immediate test of Russia's good faith is likely to be the Middle East."

Correspondent Ralph Champion of the conservative London Daily Mirror called the Ford-Brezhnev understanding "a major step forward in efforts to end the nuclear arms race," and the paper remarked in an editorial: "At least the two leaders have recognized that starting a new nuclear arms race will benefit neither side."

Hamburg: "Agreed on Basic Lines"

West German papers today headlined reports of U.S.-Soviet agreement. Frankfurter Allgemeine said Mr. Ford and Mr. Brezhnev "agreed on continuing SALT negotiations," Westdeutsche Allgemeine of Essen said they "achieved a breakthrough" and Die Welt of Hamburg reported that they "agreed on the basic lines of another SALT treaty."

Some commentators raised questions about the defense status of Europe.

"Set Aims for Next Spring"

Independent General-Anzeiger of Bonn carried the report of Washington correspondent Emil Boelte that "in his first excursion into the world as President, Ford has withstood his baptism of fire, helped by the agile Kissinger. Brezhnev and Ford got U.S.-Soviet relations off dead center. Nixon is practically forgotten."

"Brezhnev is thinking now in terms of working with Ford. Their personalities have a lot in common. Ford may well

have impressed the Soviet leader for that reason alone. It looks as if the foundation has been laid for continuing U.S.-Soviet diplomacy with the accent on two personalities...

"To be sure, Ford and Brezhnev could only agree on the general line of march which their subordinates are to follow during the negotiations in January in Geneva, with the aim of having a treaty on strategic arms limitation ready for signing at the next summit next spring in America..."

"Breakthrough Had Been Sought Before"

A byliner in right-center Die Welt of Hamburg judged that Vladivostok "apparently... produced results exceeding all expectations," all the more significant in view of the fact that such a "breakthrough" had been sought in vain twice before in Moscow. He continued:

"Now we can look to positive effects on the whole world's political landscape.... If Kissinger's announcement about SALT progress corresponds with what happened, then the U.S. must also be expected to give a green light once more for CSCE."

The writer maintained, however, that what the two leaders had to say about the Arab-Israeli conflict was more significant: "If there was no basic agreement on keeping the Middle East under control, that failure could be the Achilles heel in Kissinger's arrangement--the unguarded flank."

"A Breakthrough Too Late?"

Left-center Frankfurter Rundschau was dubious: "The two previous SALT agreements seemed merely to have led to construction of new, more terrible nuclear weapons. Against this somber background, the results of Ford's negotiations gleam like a ray of light. Precisely the previously unsettled problem--that of rockets with multiple warheads--has now been tackled.

"It remains a question, though, whether this 'breakthrough' comes too late. More and more countries--India, for example--have meanwhile acquired atomic arms..."

"Europe Less Reassured Than America"

Some observers asked questions about Europe's defense status.

A writer in pro-Christian Democratic Bonner Rundschau noted that "the U. S. intends to decrease its total of nuclear weapons in the FRG. New developments and modernization are supposed to make possible such a cutback without lessening the quality of deterrence.

"But in Europe the question will be asked: Is the reason the Soviets agreed to abandon their resistance on this point that as the quantity of U. S. atomic weapons decreases, so does the degree of threat? Again, were U. S. assurances given in Vladivostok supporting the Kremlin in this reasoning?

"Another ground for the Soviet change of heart about U. S. rockets in Europe could be that the Soviet Union is ready to bring the matter of these U. S. weapons into the MBFR talks. It is an open question whether it is in Europe's security interest to trade a withdrawal of U. S. atomic weapons for a pullback of Soviet conventional forces.

"It would seem that the breakthrough at Vladivostok cannot reassure Europe to the same degree that it is supposed to reassure America."

Independent Stuttgarter Zeitung remarked that "for America's European allies it is especially significant that, according to Kissinger, U. S. rockets based in Europe are not to be counted in calculating U. S. atomic strength. One may assume that the same goes for the Soviets' medium-range rockets aimed at European targets.

"Both the President and his Secretary of State may have a hard time back home. They must convince a Congress distrustful of armament deals that the new SALT agreement does not endanger U. S. security."

"No Breakthroughs on Forces and Weapons"

Center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich said that "apparently there is not yet a breakthrough on the horizon in the matter of Soviet and U. S. forces--and weapons--stationed in Europe....Nor have Ford and Brezhnev found a Middle East formula--beyond agreement that the armistice should continue."

"China Trip to Demonstrate USSR Priority"

Of the Kissinger trip to China, the Frankfurter Allgemeine carried a dispatch from Peking that the "almost overdue" timing of the visit was "not favorable." However, it said, Mr. Kissinger apparently wanted it so to "demonstrate to the Chinese the priority of the USSR in the American foreign policy picture."

Paris: "Marks End of Watergate Paralysis"

Middle-of-the-road Figaro of Paris carried an evaluation of the Ford-Brezhnev meeting by Washington correspondent Jacques Jacquet-Francillon, in Asia to cover the President and the Secretary. He wrote:

"After Vladivostok, Henry Kissinger is beaming. For him the 'post-Watergate era' has begun. The Siberian mini-summit has enabled him to attain in less than 36 hours the result that Richard Nixon's political death struggle had placed beyond his reach at the previous full summit in Moscow last July.

"Kissinger is convinced that he managed to persuade Leonid Brezhnev that Gerald Ford is a man with whom it is safe to negotiate, a man whose political future is by no means in jeopardy. In the eyes of the Secretary of State, this is the essential result of that unusual meeting at the end of the world: American diplomacy has at last rid itself of the paralysis to which the Watergate affair had condemned it....It is now possible to do the job in double quick time, and that's exactly what was done Saturday and Sunday in the secrecy of that Siberian resort."

Jacquet-Francillon predicted that Mr. Kissinger "will find it very difficult to convince the Chinese leaders that Russians and Americans have not just struck a bargain at their expense. But Mao's advanced age and Chou's illness have created

a virtual power vacuum within the Forbidden City, and Mr. Kissinger, who is aware of this, does not appear overly preoccupied by the difficulties he is going to face in this new mission to China."

"Cronies or Rivals?"

In intellectual-left Le Quotidien de Paris, byliner Jean-Pierre Cornet asked, "Could this summit meeting be anything but a reminder of a complicity hiding rivalry? The two cronies cannot escape their role, which is to control a peace founded on the balance of terror..."

"Under the circumstances, the diplomatic evolution of the Middle East can only be based on another version of Yalta."

"The Two Appraised the Limits of Their Influence"

Today's financial Les Echos of Paris observed, "Pleased with each other, condemned to agree or to blast away a good part of this earth, Leonid Brezhnev and Gerald Ford were able in Vladivostok to appraise the limits of their influence on world affairs. This is particularly obvious in two fields.

"One is that of atomic arms proliferation. The joint communique lists the dangers of proliferation without proposing any remedy other than the old non-proliferation treaty..."

"The other field is the Middle East, where the superpowers can still prevent a resumption of hostilities...but no longer appear able to promote peace....The time is past when the two co-chairmen of the Geneva conference could arrange a meeting on the banks of Lake Lemman and be sure all the belligerents would attend, either readily or reluctantly. In this field, the proliferation is of centers of judgment and decision."

Milan: "Why Compromise Was Possible"

A Moscow correspondent of independent conservative Corriere della Sera of Milan said today that the Vladivostok results "confirmed the forecasts made by Kissinger" and noted that "Western observers think the present compromise was possible because the Soviets and the Americans have overcome their domestic difficulties."

"Reopened Road to Peace"

An analyst in right-center Il Tempo of Rome said today that "the undoubtedly fruitful Vladivostok summit has not brought about clear or immediate commitments for common action to eliminate tensions, threats of war or even present conflicts.

"But the meeting succeeded in reopening the road which the diplomacy of both countries must travel to maintain the delicate political balance that is a realistic basis for world peace. Certainly a road to peace is open. Now we must see whether it will be followed."

Communist Paper: "A Step Forward"

Communist L'Unita of Rome, calling the Vladivostok meeting a "step forward," declared today that "the results...confirm that the process of detente between the Soviet Union and the U. S. has now become an objective necessity. The Vladivostok communique reinforces the spirit of previous Soviet-American talks. Detente and peaceful cooperation appear to be irreversible. A new breakthrough has been made on the further limitation of strategic offensive arms..."

Moscow-lining Paese Sera said "the game is extremely important and Vladivostok seems to have marked a vital starting point."

Buenos Aires: "Significant"

Buenos Aires newspapers today called the U. S. -Soviet Vladivostok result "important," and "significant."

Leftist La Calle, proclaiming "Total Detente Between USSR and U. S.," carried a Reuters dispatch citing Peking observers as saying "Kissinger will have to do much explaining...to persuade Chinese leaders that nothing is being plotted behind their backs."

Sao Paulo: "Can We Sleep Better?"

Ultima Hora of Sao Paulo yesterday carried a byliner's assertion that the Vladivostok arms limitation agreement "will permit many people to sleep better at night--depending, obviously, on how naive they are."

Tokyo: "SALT Agreement Before Brezhnev Visit?"

The conclusion of the Vladivostok talks and President Ford's return to the U.S. received top coverage in today's Japanese media.

Commercial Fuji television said today that "despite the basic nuclear agreement achieved at the Ford-Brezhnev talks there still is a feeling of tension in the U.S. over whether an agreement on SALT can be worked out before Brezhnev visits the U.S. next year."

Publicly financed NHK television today carried a Moscow correspondent's assertion that the USSR "has welcomed the Ford-Brezhnev talks because they reconfirmed the detente policy carried out by the Nixon Administration." He added that the Soviet Union "greatly appreciated the strategic arms limitation agreement reached in Vladivostok."

Independent liberal Asahi today ran a report from its Moscow correspondent that the joint communique issued after the conclusion of the Vladivostok talks Sunday "reconfirmed promotion of U.S.-Soviet detente." The paper judged that the SALT progress indicates the "firmness of the U.S.-Soviet cooperative structure."

"Talks the First Step Toward New Relations"

Independent moderate Yomiuri stated today that the major result of the Ford-Brezhnev talks was the five-point agreement on restricting strategic weapons, including missiles and bombers. It also said that the results of these talks were expected to be evaluated highly as "the first step towards new relations between the two countries during the Ford Administration."

"Smooth Start for Ford"

Today's independent moderate Mainichi called the Ford-Brezhnev talks a "break-through" on the SALT negotiations because the two sides agreed to conclude an agreement on quantitative restriction of attack missiles, bombers and MIRVs.

In the paper's opinion, President Ford's diplomacy got off to a smooth start by consolidating U.S.-USSR detente and laying the foundation for world peace. Terming the Vladivostok talks a "prelude" to the full-scale Ford-Brezhnev talks, it asserted that the Ford trip "clearly demonstrated the posture of America's linkage diplomacy."

Seoul: Emphasis on SALT and Korea

South Korean papers prominently reported today that the U.S.-USSR talks ended successfully after "dramatic" discussions on SALT and Korean relations.

Today's pro-Government Seoul Shinmun carried a wire service report that President Ford declared, "A SALT agreement with USSR is now at hand" and that "the ROK today is a symbol of economic development."

Independent conservative Donga Ilbo today called the Vladivostok talks "quite successful, since the U.S. and the USSR agreed basically on settlement of the Middle East situation, which was a growing danger, and moved toward settlement of SALT negotiations."

Hong Kong: "Neither Is Sincere About Weapons"

Independent Wah Hiu Yat Po of Hong Kong remarked, "Judging from developments in regard to the SALT talks, we believe that neither the U.S. nor the USSR is basically sincere about limiting the development of strategic weapons. What they are interested in is a balanced development of nuclear weapons under mutually observed limitations... And this is the basis of the argument that the so-called 'two superpowers' are using nuclear weapons to intimidate other nations."

Bangkok: "Worthwhile, But Did Not Deal With Middle East"

Commercial radio today carried a commentator's assertion that he was disappointed that Mr. Ford and Mr. Brezhnev had not dealt with the Middle East situation, warning that "failure of the big powers to react quickly enough to the changing international situation could constitute a danger to world peace." However, he added, "If the Vladivostok meeting was designed only to let the two leaders get acquainted, it was worthwhile, even though solving the world's problems is something that still is a long way off."

"Mere Propaganda?"

Independent Chung Hua Jit Pao of Bangkok, stating today that the communique "indicates that the two nations made a breakthrough on the limitation of ICBMs and MIRVs," conjectured, "If this is true, it is probably because Mr. Ford was induced to make concessions and fell into a Soviet trap. Otherwise the so-called breakthrough is mere propaganda."

"Mutual Backslapping?"

The Nation of Bangkok said today that although the Ford-Brezhnev agreement on limiting nuclear weapons and delivery systems was being hailed as a major breakthrough, it was really nothing more than a "mutual backslapping" exercise to boost both leaders' prestige at home.

It continued, "Are we all supposed to stand up, clap hands and shout 'hurrah?' As a small newspaper in a small country we would like to ask, 'What have you achieved?' Asserting that both the U.S. and the USSR 'are so overstocked with deadly weapons and missiles that they have agreed that they cannot produce and accommodate any more,' it declared, 'There is so much in this world that needs all the attention of the big powers--the food crisis, the energy crisis, the ecological crisis, the monetary crisis, etc.--and what the two leaders talk about and agree to is to limit the overabundance of their nuclear weapons. Sometimes logic fails and perhaps someone will find something humorous in the Ford-Brezhnev communique.'"

The paper also ridiculed the Ford trip as chalking up a series of "negative firsts," pointing out that Mr. Ford was the first non-elected Vice President and President to visit Japan, whose Prime Minister "seems to be on his last legs." Despite the pomp and circumstance, it continued, "there seems to be absolutely no meaning in the visit."

"What Secret Deals Were Made?"

Pro-Peking Hsin Chung Yuan Pao of Bangkok wrote today, "The Ford-Brezhnev communique stressed that the two nations will cooperate internationally on a peaceful basis. However, this is only a surface gloss. Who knows what secret deals were made at Vladivostok?"

Indian Headlines

Coverage of the Ford-Brezhnev joint communique dominated front pages of today's leading Indian newspapers but there was no editorial comment. These were headlines: "U. S. -Soviet Accord on Guidelines for Ten-Year 'Cap on Arms Race'" (conservative Hindu of Madras), "Ford, Brezhnev Agree to Limit Nuclear Arsenals" (independent Hindusthan Standard of Calcutta) and "Remarkable Success of Soviet-American Summit-- Accord on Missiles and Some International Problems" (Communist Kalantar of Calcutta).

Tel Aviv: "Jerusalem Would Like to Know..."

Independent Maariv of Tel Aviv today carried a byliner's assertion that "Jerusalem will be in contact with Washington over the next few days to clarify the practical significance of the U. S. -USSR communique....Jerusalem would like to know... what means are contemplated to implement the 'consideration' for Palestinian interests....The communique does not indicate what the U. S. intends to do in striving to reach an understanding with the USSR in all that is connected with the Middle East, when the subject of Palestine, as the communique reflects, is one of its (Middle East) components..."

"...Communique Is Satisfactory"

Today's independent Yediot Aharonot remarked, "Experience teaches us not to expect much out of summits....However, and despite reservations, it should be indicated that the Middle East section of the communique...is satisfactory....It is possible that after the summit talks the superpowers will cooperate in preventing another conflagration in the area..."

The paper also stated, "By endorsing Security Council Resolution 338, the Soviets are actually acting in contradiction to the (UNGA) vote on Palestinians.... (It also) indicates that the Soviets do not accept Arafat's views on a 'united Palestine.'This was known before...but it is good that it has been reconfirmed following the U. N. vote on Palestinians."

Moscow Plays Comment Hailing Summit and Arms Agreement

Soviet media last evening and today carried extensive reports from the 40 Soviet newsmen covering the Vladivostok meeting. Newspapers ran the full text of the two official documents; Pravda front-paged the communique. Central television news broadcast 35 minutes of coverage last evening, running the program overtime.

Moscow TASS, All-Union Radio, and most newspapers carried comment hailing the Ford-Brezhnev meeting and the agreement to move toward another arms limitation accord as a significant step in improving U. S. -USSR relations which also "meets vital interest of the peoples of the two countries and other nations" (Pravda, cited by TASS).

A political observer of Central Television and All-Union Radio, participating in the weekly "International Observers Roundtable" on television and on Radio Moscow's domestic and international services, predicted that "future historians will undoubtedly rank the meeting among the most important events in international developments of the Seventies." He added that "this meeting once again shows how successfully the Soviet peace program is being carried out in practice and how the process of international detente is gathering force."

TASS and Pravda carried international press roundups which they said demonstrated the "great satisfaction" with which world opinion greeted the outcome of the Vladivostok meeting.

Broadcast to Arabs Stresses Concern About Middle East

Radio Moscow's Arabic service carried a commentary last evening on the U. S. - Soviet communique, stressing that "the two sides expressed concern over the dangerous situation in the Middle East area, and they affirmed their intention to continue to do their utmost to assist in solving the main issues of a just and durable peace in this area on the basis of the Security Council's resolution, taking into consideration the legitimate rights of all the peoples in the area, including the Palestinian Arab people, and also respecting the right of all the states of the area to their independent entity." The commentary condemned Israel for "doing their utmost to aggravate the situation" with aid from "international Zionist and imperialist circles" but did not mention the U. S. in that connection.

Eastern Europe: Similar Treatment

East European media drew much the same conclusions from the Vladivostok meeting as did their Soviet counterparts. Comment generally welcomed the communique as evidence of continuing progress in detente, serving the cause of peace and holding promise of benefit not only for the U. S. and the USSR, but for peoples of other nations as well.

Warsaw's Zycie Warszawy, for example, called the U. S. -USSR summit meetings a "good and valuable tradition" which has brought about "an enormous and positive transformation in the world situation in recent years." It credited the impulse for this bright phenomenon to "the consequential realization by the Soviet Union of the peace program of the CPSU 24th Congress" which it said has evoked "positive echoes among realistic-minded American circles."